

## Message Text

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ACTION CU-04

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R 261522Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO USIA WASHDC

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 0685

USMISSION USBERLIN

AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMCONSUL HAMBURG

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 BONN 12513

USIAC

STATE FOR EUR/CE; CU

E.O. 11652:N/A

SUBJECT: FIRST EVALUATION OF FRG CELEBRATIONS OF THE  
U.S. BICENTENNIAL

SUMMARY: AT HALF-WAY POINT IN THE MAMMOTH FRG  
CELEBRATION OF THE BICENTENNIAL, MISSION VIEW IS IT HAS  
REVITALIZED THE GERMAN-AMERICAN RELATIONSHIP AND ENHANCED  
CLIMATE FOR U.S. PUBLIC DIPLOMACY. HOWEVER, EVEN A PRIZE  
APPLE CAN HAVE A WORM AND PROBLEM AREAS IN THE RELATION-  
SHIP REMAIN AND OTHERS LOOM AHEAD. THE SPECTACULAR  
PHENOMENON OF WEST GERMAN CELEBRATION THEREFORE MUST NOT  
DELUDE INTO BELIEVING IT ALLOWS LESSENING OF THE PUBLIC  
AFFAIRS EFFORT. END SUMMARY.

1. WITH THE VOLUME OF U.S. BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATIONS IN  
THE FRG NOW SLACKENING OFF FOR THE SUMMER SEASON, A  
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MOMENT ARISES FOR PRELIMINARY REFLECTION ABOUT THIS

PHENOMENON. THE NEW DEUTSCHE STAEDTEBUND (ASSOCIATION OF GERMAN CITIES) ESTIMATE IS AROUND 6,000 AS THE FINAL NUMBER OF EVENTS WHICH WILL HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN THE FRG DURING 1976.

2. WHILE IN SOME INSTANCES LOCAL CELEBRATIONS HAVE A LITTLE UNDERTONE OF CIVIC AND TOURISTIC PROMOTION, ALL EVENTS WE KNOW OF WHICH TOOK PLACE THUS FAR, WHETHER SOLEMN OR FOLKSY, HAVE HAD AN AIR OF AUTHENTICITY AND GOOD TASTE. THE VARIETY HAS BEEN HARD TO GRASP, RANGING FROM RODEOS, SUMMER FESTIVALS THROUGH SEMINARS, EXHIBITS AND CEREMONIES IN MANY CITIES THE APOGEE OF WHICH WAS THE ONE IN MAY AT THE PAULSKIRCHE IN FRANKFURT.

3. MEDIA COVERAGE, SPECIAL SHOWS, MAGAZINE ISSUES, BOOKS, ARTICLES, ETC., HAVE BEEN APPEARING IN THE ELECTRONIC AND PRINT MEDIA SEEMINGLY WITHOUT PAUSE SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR. ONE OF GERMANY'S MOST SENIOR POLITICAL JOURNALISTS OBSERVED THAT IN HIS LIFE TIME HE HAD NEVER EXPERIENCED ANYWHERE SUCH A VOLUNTARY FRIENDLY OUTPOURING OF INFORMATION, COMMENT AND REPORTING ABOUT ANOTHER COUNTRY. THERE HAVE BEEN A FEW TELEVISION PROGRAMS WHICH WERE ESSENTIALLY NEGATIVE ABOUT THE U.S. SINCE GERMAN TELEVISION, LIKE THAT IN SOME OTHER COUNTRIES, HARBORS NESTS OF VERY LEFT-WING WOULD-BE INTELLECTUALS, IT IS NOTABLE THAT THE ABSOLUTE MAJORITY OF BICENTENNIAL TV PROGRAMS IN THE MAIN HAVE BEEN POSITIVE AND CONSTRUCTIVE. SOME HAVE BEEN OUTSTANDING IN QUALITY OF PRODUCTION AND INTEREST. PRINT PRESS AND PERIODICALS WITH A VERY FEW EXCEPTIONS, NOTABLY A NEFARIOUS SERIES IN DER SPIEGEL, HAVE PROVIDED A FLOOD OF POSITIVE INFORMATION ABOUT THE UNITED STATES. ALL OF THIS BROUGHT TOGETHER TOTALS A CONCENTRATED, MASSIVE EXPOSURE OF THE U.S. IN A SHORT TIME FRAME (SIX MONTHS) TO AN ENORMOUS GERMAN AUDIENCE, A MANIFESTATION WITHOUT PARALLEL IN THIS COUNTRY. THIS LEADS TO SEVERAL BASIC QUESTIONS.

4. THE FIRST, PARTICULARLY SINCE THE BICENTENNIAL EVENTS ARE FAR FROM OVER, IS DOES IT ADD UP TO OVERKILL? IN OUR UNCLASSIFIED

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JUDGMENT IT DOES NOT. THE REASON IS THAT THE EVENTS, ETC., EXCEPT FOR AROUND JULY 4 HAVE BEEN SUFFICIENTLY SPREAD OUT GEOGRAPHICALLY AND OVER TIME, AND HAVE BEEN SO VARIED AS TO APPEAL TO ENTIRELY DIFFERENT SETS OF AUDIENCES.

5. HAS THE OVER-ALL IMPACT BEEN POSITIVE? YES. THE MOST IMPORTANT ASPECT OF THE PHENOMENON IS THAT IT LARGELY WAS

SELF-GENERATED AND SPONTANEOUS. AS THE EVENTS  
SO FAR HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL, THERE EXISTS AMONG GERMANS  
SOMETHING AKIN TO THE SATISFACTION OF HOST WHO HAS  
PULLED OFF A GOOD PARTY WHICH THE GUESTS ENJOYED.  
UNQUESTIONABLY, VERY MANY GERMANS ARE LEARNING MORE ABOUT  
THE UNITED STATES THAN THEY EVER DID BEFORE. ESTEEM OF

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AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF  
AMCONSUL FRANKFURT  
AMCONSUL HAMBURG  
AMCONSUL MUNICH  
AMCONSUL STUTTGART

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THE U.S. IS MOVING UP TO THE HIGHEST IT HAS BEEN IN  
YEARS. NOT AS HIGH AS IT WAS 20 YEARS AGO, BUT  
BEGINNING TO RETURN TO THE PRE-VIETNAM PRE-WATERGATE  
LEVELS.

6. WHY THE GERMAN FERVOR TO CELEBRATE? THE ANSWER  
COMBINES SEVERAL FACTORS. ONE IS THAT THE AMERICAN  
BICENTENNIAL AFFORDED MANY GERMANS ABOVE 45 OPPORTUNITY  
TO SAY "THANK YOU" FOR THE U.S. POST-WAR ASSISTANCE. THE  
MOST PERSONALIZED PART OF AMERICAN AID WERE THE CARE

PACKETS. WE ARE TOLD OVER AND OVER THAT THEY MEANT THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MARGINAL SURVIVAL, IF AT ALL, AND MAKING IT. "WE CAN NEVER FORGET THIS." GIVEN MAN'S GENERAL INGRATITUDE TO MAN FOR FAVOR RECEIVED, IT IS WARMING TO FIND GRATITUDE AND APPRECIATION EXISTING AFTER SO LONG AMONG SO MANY. AS ONE CITY MAYOR PUT IT, "THE MARSHALL PLAN GAVE US THE MEANS OF REBUILDING GERMANY BUT IT WAS THE CARE PACKAGES WHICH GAVE US THE WILL AND THE UNCLASSIFIED

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ENERGY TO BEGIN." ANOTHER ASPECT IS SOMETHING LIKE AN ACT OF ATONEMENT ON THE PART OF SOME FOR HAVING BEEN MUM, AT BEST, DURING THE ANTI-U.S. PERIOD IN THE SIXTIES AND EARLY SEVENTIES. STILL ANOTHER ASPECT, AND A VERY STRONG ONE CHARACTERIZING CELEBRATIONS FROM SMALL-TOWN TO LAND LEVEL, IS THAT THE BICENTENNIAL OFFERS GERMANS IN ALL PARTS OF THE COUNTRY OPPORTUNITY TO SHOW THAT THEIR PEOPLE HAD MADE SPECIFIC CONTRIBUTION TO THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE UNITED STATES. THERE IS PRIDE IN THIS AND A BIT OF THE "WE COUNT FOR SOMETHING IN THE WORLD" FEELING. AT OTHER LEVELS, THERE IS THE DESIRE "TO SHOW AMERICA WE GERMANS ARE YOUR GOOD ALLIES AND FRIENDS," AND GENUINE APPRECIATION FOR THE U.S. ROLE IN EUROPEAN DEFENSE. IN SOME INSTANCES, PRO-AMERICAN CELEBRATIONS TOOK PLACE BECAUSE IT HAD BECOME THE IN THING -- IF ONLY OF THE MOMENT -- TO DO. SINCE THE REVERSE WAS TRUE IN THE RECENT PAST, THIS IS WELCOME. A SENSE OF OBLIGATION WAS PERHAPS THE LEAST PART OF THE OVER-ALL PICTURE. WHILE PRESUMABLY A FACTOR IN THE MINDS OF EARLY PLANNERS AT HIGH GOVERNMENT LEVELS, WHOSE ACTIVITY SPARKED THE PHENOMENON, IT SEEMS QUITE CLEAR THAT "WE OUGHT TO" WAS QUICKLY SUPPLANTED BY "WE WANT TO" AS CELEBRATIONS ROARED OFF INTO A GENUINE GRASS-ROOTS MANIFESTATION. TO A STARTLING DEGREE, ORGANIZERS OF EVENTS, ETC., HAVE BEEN PAST BENEFICIARIES OF THE EXCHANGES AND AMERICA HOUSE PROGRAMS. FOR EXAMPLE, THE MAYOR OF ONE LITTLE TOWN WHICH PUT ON A GOOD SHOW, SAID THAT HIS YEAR IN THE U.S. HAD BEEN THE TURNING POINT IN HIS LIFE AND HE NEVER WOULD HAVE THOUGHT OF ENTERING PUBLIC SERVICE HAD HE NOT BEEN STIMULATED BY HIS AMERICAN EXPERIENCE. IN DISCUSSING THE WHY OF THE GERMAN ENTHUSIASM, A HIGH FRG OFFICIAL SAID HE WAS SURPRISED THAT WE WERE SURPRISED. AFTER ALL, HE POINTED OUT, THE U.S. CULTURAL AND INFORMATION PROGRAM IN THE FRG DESPITE BIG CUTBACKS HAS BEEN THE MOST CONSISTENT AND WIDESPREAD IN EUROPE, AND WITHOUT IT THE MAGNITUDE OF THE RESPONSE TO THE BICENTENNIAL SIMPLY COULD NOT HAVE COME ABOUT. "YOU AMERICANS DO SOMETHING THE WAY IT REALLY SHOULD BE DONE AND THEN SEEM SURPRISED WHEN IT WORKS."

7. HAS ALL THIS STRENGTHENED FRG RELATIONS?

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THE ANSWER ALSO IS, YES. THE STRENGTHENING IS OCCURRING AT TWO LEVELS, THE PUBLIC AND THE PRIVATE. STARTING WITH THE LATTER, THE BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATIONS HAVE BROUGHT TO A GREAT MANY GERMANS A NEW AWARENESS AND PERHAPS A DEEPER AND MORE REALISTIC UNDERSTANDING OF OUR COUNTRY. TO A GREAT MANY YOUNG PEOPLE, IT IS AS IF THEY DISCOVERED AMERICA FOR THE FIRST TIME. WHILE SOME STUDENTS, EVEN OUTSIDE THE RADICAL ELEMENTS, HOLD TO ANTI-AMERICAN CLICHES AND HAVE TURNED THEIR BACKS ON THE CELEBRATIONS, ONE OF THE MANIFESTATIONS WITHIN THE PHENOMENON HAS BEEN THE INCREASE IN TRAVEL OF THE YOUNG GERMANS TO AND THROUGHOUT THE U.S. AND A GREATLY ACCELERATED APPEARANCE OF THE YOUNG AT THE AMERICA HOUSES. THE JULY 4 PROGRAM OF THE COLOGNE AH FOR EXAMPLE DREW NEARLY FOUR THOUSAND, SOMETHING VIRTUALLY UNTHINKABLE EVEN A YEAR AGO. ON THE OFFICIAL SIDE, AN ARRAY OF LEADERS ALL OVER THE COUNTRY WHICH MAKES UP A ROSTER READING LIKE A WHO'S WHO IN GERMANY HAS MADE PUBLIC DECLARATIONS OF FRIENDSHIP TOWARD AND TRUST IN THE UNITED STATES, IN QUITE A FEW CASES AFTER LONG SILENCE ON THE SUBJECT. THIS, IN TURN, HAS INCREASED CONFIDENCE IN THE U.S. AMONG THE POPULATION.

8. ONE OF THE PRIME PAY-OFFS HAS BEEN THE INCREASE AND EXTENSION OF CONTACTS, INSTITUTIONAL AS WELL AS PERSONAL.

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AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF  
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IT IS BEING ACHIEVZD BY ASSISTANCE GIVEN TO ORGANIZATIONS, INSTITUTIONS, CITIES AND OTHERS WHICH HAD LITTLE OR NO PRIOR CONTACT WITH US BEFORE OR WHERE CONTACT HAD BEEN LOST. RELATIONS WITH EXISTING ONES WERE PUT ON A FIRMER BASIS. IT HAS BEEN STIMULATED BY THE MAGNITUDE OF PERSONAL APPEARANCES MADE BY MISSION AND CONSULAR OFFICERS. FOR EXAMPLE, THE AMBASSADOR ALONE DURING A PERIOD OF FIVE MONTHS PARTICIPATED IN NEARLY THIRTY EVENTS ALL BUT TWO REQUIRING AN ADDRESS OR SPEECH. OF GREAT VALUE IS THE REOPENING TO US OF UNIVERSITIES AND ESTABLISHMENT OF RELATIONS WITH YOUTH GROUPS, SOME OF WHICH ARE RELATIVELY NEW AND NEVER HAD ANY CONTACT WITH US BEFORE.

9. ANOTHER BONUS HAS BEEN THE UNEARTHING OF MUCH FORGOTTEN OR EVEN UNKNOWN HISTORICAL MATERIAL BEARING ON THE U.S.-GERMAN RELATIONSHIP. EVENTUALLY THIS WILL BE DRAWN TOGETHER. WHILE NONE SO FAR HAS BROUGHT UP ANY-  
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THING WHICH WOULD CAST A DIFFERENT LIGHT ON IT, THE VOLUME AND QUALITY IS SUCH AS TO PROVIDE DETAIL AND A DEPTH NOT EXISTING BEFORE. STILL ANOTHER BONUS, APPEARING IN SEVERAL LAENDER, IS A REQUIREMENT TO TEACH AMERICAN HISTORY AND CULTURE IN THE SECONDARY SCHOOL SYSTEMS, WHICH ALREADY BEGAN IN SOME OF THEM BEFORE VACATIONS STARTED.

10. SOME OTHER GENERAL OBSERVATIONS CAN BE MADE. IT WOULD SEEM NO OTHER OCCASION ASSOCIATED WITH OUR COUNTRY SINCE THE END OF WORLD WAR II HAS SO CAPTURED THE IMAGINATION AND ACTIVE PARTICIPATION OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC IN MOST PARTS OF THE FRG AS HAS THE CELEBRATION OF THE AMERICAN BICENTENNIAL. THE INTENSITY OF CELEBRA-

TING BEARS A DIRECT RELATIONSHIP TO THE LOCATION AND STRENGTH OF THE AMERICAN PRESENCE. FOR EXAMPLE, IT IS WEAKEST IN THE SOUTHERN-MOST PART OF BADEN-WUERTEMBERG, WHERE THE ONLY EVENTS HAVE BEEN THOSE GENERATED BY OR THROUGH THE GAI FREIBURG, THE SOLE AMERICAN PRESENCE IN THAT AREA. THEY HAVE BEEN PARTICULARLY STRONG WHERE THERE IS HEAVY U.S. MILITARY AND CULTURAL/POLITICO PRESENCE. THE CELEBRATIONS HAVE BROUGHT A RENEWED SPIRIT OF COOPERATION BETWEEN AMERICANS AND GERMANS IN SEVERAL KEY SECTORS. THERE IS A DEFINITE TURN AWAY FROM THE "KULTURPESSIMISMUS" ABOUT THINGS AMERICAN. AN IMAGE OF A UNITED STATES FULLY RECOVERED FROM THE TRAUMAS OF VIETNAM AND WATERGATE IS EMERGING, AN IMAGE OF A STABILIZED AND RENEWED COUNTRY. ON THE IDEOLOGICAL SIDE, CONCEPTS ABOUT FREEDOM, LIBERTY AND MUTUAL SECURITY BECAUSE OF THE GREAT AMOUNT OF DISCUSSION IN MANY FORA HAVE RECEIVED AN UNDERSTANDING PERHAPS NEW TO MANY GERMANS. ON THE PRAGMATIC SIDE, TRAVEL TO THE U.S. FROM GERMANY ZOOMED UP.

11. IN SUM, THE U.S. BICENTENNIAL HAS OFFERED BOTH GERMANS AND AMERICANS AN EXTRAORDINARY OCCASION TO REVITALIZE THE ALLIANCE, FOR FENCE-MENDING, RENEWAL OF OLD CONTACTS AND STARTING OF NEW ONES. BOTH SIDES ARE TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THIS AND THE RESULT IS AN ENHANCED ATMOSPHERE FOR U.S. PUBLIC DIPLOMACY AND AN IMPROVED IMAGE OF THE U.S. IN THE FRG.

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12. EVEN THE GARDEN OF EDEN HAD A SNAKE. IN CONTEMPLATING THE FRG CELEBRATION OF 200 YEARS USA, IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT ONE NOT GET CARRIED AWAY BY EUPHORIA. THERE REMAINS RESENTMENT AMONG SOME GERMANS ABOUT DEPENDENCY ON THE UNITED STATES, HOSTILITY ABOUT THE PRESENCE OF OUR TROOPS, A TENDENCY TO BLAME THINGS THAT GO WRONG ON THE AMERICANS, CYNICISM REGARDING OUR FOREIGN POLICY, DOUBT ABOUT OUR DOMESTIC ACCOMPLISHMENTS, AND PLAIN OPPORTUNISM DEPENDING ON WHICH WAY THE WINDS BLOW. IF 67 PERCENT OF GERMAN ADULTS, ACCORDING TO THE RECENT WICKERT POLL, CONSIDER THE U.S. THEIR MOST IMPORTANT FRIEND, 33 PERCENT BY THE SAME TOKEN DO NOT. THE BICENTENNIAL GAVE US A NOT-TO-BE REPEATED CHANCE TO BEGIN BRIDGING THE GENERATION GAP AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES INDICATED IN THE PRECEDING PARAGRAPHS. WE HAVE TAKEN ADVANTAGE THEREOF, PERHAPS WITH A GREATER DEGREE OF SUCCESS THAN WE FIRST THOUGHT POSSIBLE. WE ARE NOW DEALING WITH A MOMENTUM WHICH MUST BE CONTINUED. NOT TO DO SO FULLY AND WELL WOULD BE DANGEROUS FOLLY.

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